

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-05 SAJ-01 MC-01 TRSE-00 /070 R

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APPROVED BY AF:DBEASUM

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P R 150006Z JAN 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 009283

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, ML, UV

SUBJECT: MALI-UPPER VOLTA BORDER DISPUTE

REF: STATE 005264; STATE 001686; STATE 281495

PARIS FOR MELONE

1. VOLTAN AMBASSADOR YAGUIBOU AT HIS REQUEST CALLED ON ASST SECY EASUM JANUARY 13 TO PURSUE GOUV'S REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING ARMS. (DEP ASST SECY BLAKE WAS PRESENT).

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2. YAGUIBOU SAID THAT BASED ON NEW INFORMATION IN HAND

HE COULD STATE THAT WITH THE COMMENCEMENT OF MEDIATION EFFORTS BY THE TWO SUB-COMMISSIONS (MILITARY AND LEGAL) OF THE LOME QUADRIPARTITE COMMISSION, THE SPIRIT OF BELLIGERENCY IN MALI AND UPPER VOLTA HAD SUBSIDED; "THE STORM HAS PASSED." IN RECENT TELECON WITH VOLTAN MIN DEF BABA SY, HAD LEARNED GOUV IS CONSIDERING RESTRUCTURING ITS DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT OVER LONGER TERM AND, IN THIS REGARD, TAKING SECOND LOOK AT QUANTITIES OF ARMS/MATERIEL NEEDED AND REVIEWING PENDING REQUESTS TO U.S. FOR ASSISTANCE. HE INQUIRED STATUS PENDING REQUESTS (REFTELS).

3. EASUM REPLIED THAT USG HAS VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES UNDER CONSIDERATION; THAT IN FIRST INSTANCE DECISION REACHED WILL BE BASED ON PRINCIPLE; THAT WE DO NOT WANT TO DO ANYTHING WHICH MIGHT COMPROMISE PROSPECTS OF PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF DISPUTE. IN ANY EVENT, HE BELIEVED COMMERCIAL PURCHASES NON-LETHAL ITEMS PROBABLY WOULD BE PERMITTED.

4. YAGUIBOU RETURNED TO QUESTION OF SHOPPING LIST HE RECEIVED FROM MIN PLAN DAKOURE AND DELIVERED TO EASUM. SAID SOME TYPES OF WEAPONS DELETED FROM LIST AND GOUV NOW DESIRED PURCHASE ONLY 3000 M-16 RIFLES AND 1.0 MILLION ROUNDS AMMUNITION; THIS WOULD BARELY SUFFICE TO EQUIP A REPUBLICAN GUARD, MUCH LESS AN ARMY. EASUM REJOINED THAT ARMS PURCHASES OF EVEN THIS MAGNITUDE COULD INVOKE NEGATIVE PUBLIC REACTION IN U.S. IN TERMS PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR SAHELIAN DROUGHT RELIEF, WHICH HAD ENABLED U.S. TO SPEND DOLS 85 MILLION ON RELIEF EFFORT. YAGUIBOU RESPONDED THAT VOLTAN REQUEST COULD BE READILY EXPLAINED TO AMERICAN PUBLIC BECAUSE IT WAS REASONABLE ONE; SAID IT CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT NEITHER MALI NOR UPPER VOLTA COULD SUSTAIN A WAR EFFORT FOR TWO WEEKS. EASUM REPLIED THAT OUR DECISION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT PRESENT ATMOSPHERE, THAT MEDIATION EFFORT IS UNDERWAY AND MUST NOT BE COMPROMISED.

5. YAGUIBOU THEN ASSERTED THAT VOLTANS' NEED FOR ARMS WAS IMMEDIATE, WHILE MEDIATION COMMISSION WOULD BE SLOW IN REACHING DECISION; IT MIGHT TAKE TWO YEARS. IF USG WERE UNRESPONSIVE TO GOUV'S REQUEST, PRESIDENT LAMIZANA
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MIGHT THINK THE U.S. UNFRIENDLY. BLAKE INTERJECTED THERE NO QUESTION OF U.S. FRIENDSHIP FOR UPPER VOLTA, BUT WE HAD LEARNED FROM LONG AND DIFFICULT EXPERIENCE THAT IN REGARD CRITICAL QUESTION OF ARMS, IT BEST TO MOVE SLOWLY. KISSINGER

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